

*Regional Development*

I should like to complete the record by quoting more of the statistics to which I referred a while ago. Victoriaville, Quebec, comes first on the list of communities with the lowest incomes in Canada west of the New Brunswick border. St. Hyacinthe is second, Pembroke is third, Midland is fourth, Moose Jaw is fifth; Granby, Quebec is sixth; Drummondville, seventh; St. Jerome, eighth; Magog, ninth and St. Jean, tenth. Yet some of these communities, which are lower on this list than Pembroke, have been classified as designated areas.

Members of this House will recall that three months ago I rose to criticize the CBC for taking a one-sided view of the forest industry in the Algonquin Park area of Ontario. It is obvious to many why I did so: forestry is one of the mainstays of the industry which at the present time provides us with employment. If people move in on us and apply pressure to destroy our basic industry at a time when we are getting nothing new, where will it leave the entire upper Ottawa Valley? I think it is time for people to stand up and be counted in connection with this effort to attract industry to eastern Ontario. I should like to mention that for the purpose of wage zoning in connection with the Public Service of Canada, the area of Pembroke, Pettawawa, Chalk River and Foy-mont falls between North Bay and Ottawa and has the lowest wage level of the three. In my opinion this is wrong, because it is merely perpetuating low wage rates and slow economic growth.

People travel from our area to places such as Kitchener to find employment. I believe the hon. member from Kitchener told me that less than one per cent of the work force there is unemployed. Many people travel from the upper Ottawa Valley to Kitchener, Toronto, Ottawa and North Bay to find work. This supports the argument put forward by my hon. friend from Lanark and Renfrew when he said we were not representing people who were unwilling to go out and help themselves. These men and women have proved they are willing to put forth an effort. Every week end people telephone me looking for jobs. Some of them have large families. It becomes depressing, Mr. Speaker, when as many as 20 people call at one's home on a Saturday morning and one does not know quite what to do for them. I suppose one could walk off and forget about it, but I cannot. I can say in all sincerity that as long as I am a member of this House representing an Ottawa Valley constituency,

[Mr. Hopkins.]

come what may I shall be fighting the battle for designation and improvement plans for this area.

My hon. friend from Lanark and Renfrew said he could not quite pin down responsibility for the decision that Renfrew county should not be designated. This is the sort of thing that becomes a political football. Perhaps I was looking into the future when on June 25 last I made the following statement in a speech in the House on an opposition motion having to do with urban renewal. I was arguing that some of our industrial capacity should be diverted from large urban areas to smaller communities across Canada; that financial and other inducements should be offered to promote such development and to take the heat off the too rapid expansion in the urban centres. Let me quote what I said in my speech on June 25 last, as reported at page 10630 of *Hansard*:

● (5:40 p.m.)

The Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Marchand) introduced a bill which would have the effect of spreading out the economic development of Canada. What must the minister do to see that the program is effectively carried out? He must obtain agreement from the provinces because the hands of the federal government are tied.

When the announcement of this legislation was made, I clearly stated in an interview that although this decision had obviously been worked out by federal and provincial civil servants, the final decision had come from the cabinet. As a member of the House—my constituents feel the same way as I do—I am nauseated by the fact that provincial civil servants, and indeed some of our federal civil servants, are making such drastic and basic decisions which affect rural and other areas of Canada. I feel very strongly that the politics of this nation must be returned to the hands of the politicians and not remain in the hands of the bureaucracy.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear hear.

**Mr. Bell:** Another one will be going.

**Mr. Hopkins:** The hon. member says another one will be going. Notwithstanding this remark, I have a theory on this question. Let me tell the hon. member that if I ever cease being a member of the Liberal Party I will not cross the floor.

**Mr. Peters:** Is that a promise? We do not like all this switching around.